

ARTICLE APPEARED  
ON PAGE 1A

WASHINGTON TIMES  
24 October 1983

STAT

# Reagan determined to remain in Beirut

By Jeremiah O'Leary  
WASHINGTON TIMES STAFF

President Reagan reacted with outrage and grief at the terrorist bomb slayings of U.S. Marines at Beirut airport but made it clear that he is determined not to permit the United States to be driven out of that strategic area.

Reagan cut short his vacation trip in Augusta, Ga., in the dark hours of yesterday morning when word of the tragedy reached him. The president hurriedly flew back to Washington, where he convened two meetings of the National Security Council. Reporting on the first meeting of one hour and 40 minutes in the White House situation room, White House Deputy Press Secretary Larry Speakes told reporters there will be no change in the commitment of the United States to keep the Marines in Lebanon as part of the multinational peace force.

Instead, the president and his closest advisers agreed to replace the casualties, which amount to more than one-tenth of the total Marine force of 1,600 troops ashore. But the White House spokesman and Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger said they did not think that increasing the size of the Marine amphibious unit at Beirut airport will help in performance of its peace-keeping mission.

The administration set a high priority on finding out which of the factions in Lebanon was responsible for the carnage. Weinberger and Speakes, however, said publicly that there "is a lot of circumstantial evidence that points in the direction of Iran, just as there was much that pointed that way in connection with the bombing last spring of the American Embassy."

Speakes said the United States has not been able to analyze the evidence yet. But he added, "We have intelligence concerning this incident that circumstantially points to Iranian terrorists." Speakes said no group has claimed responsibility for the two massive bombings but declared, "We have had some suspicions all along."

After the second NSC meeting, which lasted three hours until 7 p.m., Speakes said, speaking for the president, "We also intend to respond to this criminal act when the perpetrators are identified. All I can say to the perpetrators is: 'Wait and see.'" The spokesman said the Marines in Beirut are in the highest state of alert to prevent a repetition of the bombing. He said no holds will be barred so that the Marines can protect themselves.

In a statement, Speakes said the bombings "were deliberate and heinous acts of international terrorism. These attacks were clearly designed to weaken our determination and to disrupt the efforts of the government of Lebanon to regain control over the country."

"One thing is clear. We will not yield to international terrorism because we know that if we do, the civilized world will suffer and our values will be fair game for those who seek to destroy all we stand for."

A senior U.S. official said the United States blames the Syrians for inspiring the continuation of the fighting in Lebanon but that the terror attacks could be quite different. He said some officials in Washington suspect the Iranians but there has been no public judgment to this effect from the administration.

The NSC meetings at 9 a.m. and again at 4 p.m. were convened primarily to "review the immediate situation in Beirut." The NSC meetings, Speakes said, were to study ways of decreasing the vulnerability of the American forces in Lebanon. Weinberger said, "There was no talk of pulling the Marines out. There's just talk of trying to get some kind of better position for them. Our commitment to the cause of securing a peaceful Middle East remains. We simply can't leave the area to terrorism or whatever Soviet involvement there may be in connection with Soviet assistance to Syria, which is another destabilizing factor."

Weinberger hinted that the U.S. naval task force off the Lebanese coast is a significant part of the ability to protect the Marines ashore. He said these powerful ships can be used to protect the Marines in a very substantial way.

Reagan, asked at his press conference last week why the Marines could not take some more defensible positions, replied, "We are looking at everything that can be done to try and make their position safer. The Marines will always defend themselves and we will provide that defense."

But there was no sign last night that Reagan was ready to make greater use of naval and air power or to permit the Marines to occupy safer positions, including high ground overlooking their bivouac on the Beirut airport grounds. All options were being considered at the two NSC meetings but there was no solid information on what was decided by Reagan and his top advisers.

Reagan ordered Gen. Paul X. Kelley, the Marine Commandant, to leave immediately for Beirut to conduct an investigation and a complete review of ways to provide better protection for the Marines there. Kelley was to leave today and is under orders to report back to Reagan as soon as possible, Speakes said.

CONTINUED

ARTICLE APPEARED  
ON PAGE A-4

BALTIMORE SUN

Approved For Release 2005/12/14 : CIA-RDP91-00901R000600200019-3

# As more Marines head for Beirut, redefined mission urged

By Ernest B. Furgurson  
Chief of The Sun's Washington Bureau

Washington — The United States demonstrated its resolve yesterday by dispatching Marine replacements to Lebanon little more than 12 hours after first reports of a suicide-bombing attack that killed 147 American troops at the Beirut airport.

But there were rising calls for a redefinition of those forces' mission as President Reagan rushed back from a golfing weekend in Georgia to confer with his national security advisers.

Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger said there was "circumstantial evidence" that Iran may have had a role in the attack on the headquarters barracks of the Marine force stationed at Beirut airport. He also said he was "not convinced" that the Soviet Union was uninvolved.

The president told reporters that the "despicable act" should make Americans "more determined than ever" that those responsible "cannot take over that vital and strategic area...."

A White House statement declared, "The mission of the United States and the multilateral force has not changed. There is no change in our commitment and we are exploring ways to reduce the vulnerability of our forces."

But legislators in both parties were unhappy that the nation's greatest military losses since the Vietnam war had taken place in a situation where the U.S. role and its potential end point are still unclear.

Senator Paul S. Sarbanes (D, Md.) said, "Congress should press the president very hard... to define the mission" of U.S. troops. He said he questioned whether any superpower should be involved in such a peace-keeping role.

Senator Sam Nunn (D, Ga.) said, "I've not got anybody in the administration to tell me what success is" in Lebanon. He urged shoring up the U.S. position, then a phased withdrawal and replacement by United Nations forces. American forces now are "not a deterrent, they are hostages," he said.

Senator Charles McC. Mathias, Jr. (R, Md.) said, "We shouldn't pull out in reaction to this — that would be re-

warding the murderers." But he said it would be hard to persuade other countries to risk such casualties as part of a U.N. contingent.

Former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, chairman of a White House task force seeking solutions in another trouble spot, Central America, declared that if U.S. troops "continue to sit [in Lebanon] passively," the situation will continue to deteriorate. If there were a "coherent plan," he said, he would not oppose an increase in the American force.

Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D, Mass.) called for a Senate investigation into "the unbelievable breakdown in security" that permitted the bombing to happen, and "the prospect that something like it could happen again, and the danger that the Marine force will continue to be a sitting duck."

At Camp Lejeune, N.C., home base of the Marine detachment in Lebanon, Maj. Gen. Al Gray announced at 2:45 p.m. that troops would leave 15 minutes later to bring the 24th Amphibious Unit back to full strength.

As those replacements took off in helicopters, the National Security Council was gathering at the White House to discuss the next moves to be made at the strategic level.

The explosion in the headquarters barracks at the Beirut airport took place at 12:22 a.m. EDT (6:20 a.m. in Lebanon). At 2:27 a.m. in Washington, President Reagan was awakened in his cabin at Augusta, Ga., by a call from his newly chosen national security adviser, Robert C. McFarlane.

The two of them conferred for two hours with Secretary of State George P. Shultz, who was spending the weekend with the president. At 3:05 a.m., Mr. Reagan telephoned Gen. Paul X. Kelley, commandant of the Marine Corps, to be brought up to date.

At 6:36, the president's motorcade left the Augusta golf club in the rain, and Air Force One took off for Washington at 7:17 a.m. Reaching the White House at 8:37, Mr. Reagan stood under an umbrella to tell reporters that "no words can express our sorrow and grief over the loss of those splendid young men and the injury to so many others...."

"Likewise, there are no words to properly express our outrage... at the despicable act, following as it does the one perpetrated several months ago... that took the lives of scores of people at our embassy in that same city...."

"These deeds make so evident the bestial nature of those who would assume power, if they could have their way, and drive us out of that area...." Thus, he said, "we must be more determined than ever that they cannot take over that vital and strategic area of the earth...."

Mr. Reagan attended a 9 a.m. meeting in the White House situation room with Mr. Shultz, Mr. Weinberger, Mr. McFarlane, General Kelley, Vice President Bush, Gen. John W. Vessey Jr., chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, John McMahon, deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and top presidential aides James A. Baker III, Edwin Meese III and Michael K. Deaver. That session broke up at 10:40 and the National Security Council convened formally at 4 p.m.

Larry Speakes, White House spokesman, said Secretary Weinberger's comments on the possible involvement of Iran in the bombing were based on "a certain amount of intelligence that we have gathered since the bombing of the U.S. embassy several months ago, and the sniper terrorist attacks that have continued over the last 10 days...."

"That is our circumstantial evidence," he said. "There is no physical evidence [at the blast site] out of this yet."

Former Secretary Kissinger suggested "a change in the balance of forces" in Lebanon, implying that he meant involving Israel. That, he said, would improve the U.S. negotiating position in its effort to see a stable, independent Lebanon.

*CONTINUED*

WASHINGTON POST

20 October 1983

Capitol Punishment*The Spy the Spies Love*

By Art Buchwald

Who says there aren't heroes left in America any more? Just the other day, in a surprise ceremony, the CIA awarded CIA Director William J. Casey the "Distinguished Intelligence Medal," the agency's highest award. Casey was cited for "outstanding leadership" and for restoring the credibility of the CIA and bringing "imagination to our operation."

In the past, a decoration of this magnitude was usually reserved until the director retired or resigned from the job. But apparently the people who work for Casey couldn't wait. I am not privy to how these awards are made, but I know they're not easy to get.

They must have an awards committee out at Langley that goes over every one of the citation nominations to make sure the person is deserving of the honor.

"Gentlemen, our first nominee is James Blickstein, who, in a clandestine operation, dropped behind enemy lines in Afghanistan and delivered needed radio equipment to the rebels. He then walked barefoot 500 miles across Russian-held territory back to Pakistan. Does he get a medal?"

"He's paid to do that. Why should he get an award? If we give out the 'Distinguished Intelligence Medal' to every Tom, Dick and Harry involved in a clandestine operation, it will deflate its value."

"Okay, let's forget Blickstein. The second nominee is Hiram Cope, who managed to go over the wall at the Soviet's submarine base at Murmansk and steal all the U.S.S.R.'s naval codes. He then swam to Norway in a frogman suit."

"Big deal. I'll admit it wasn't a bad operation, but is it worth a medal?"

"All in favor say aye—all against, nay. The nays have it. Scratch Cope."

"We now come to Nicaragua and Honduras."

managed to get around all the restrictions the congressional Committee on Intelligence laid down for covert operations, and got his people to bomb Nicaraguan soil."

"He should get a medal."

"But do we want to give him the highest one?"

"I don't think we do, because we have to make him the fall guy in case Congress starts raising a ruckus. Let's give him the CIA's Good Conduct Award. We can always give him the biggie just before we fire him."

"We're all agreed then on T.L. Now I have a CIA person that I am proud to nominate. I propose that we give the 'Distinguished Intelligence Medal' to none other than our revered director, William J. Casey."

"I have no quarrel with that. The man certainly has gone beyond the call of duty."

"You won't hear a nay from me. He's the bravest of the brave."

"The smartest of the smart."

"His outstanding leadership has made this organization what it is today."

"If it wasn't for his imagination I don't know where we'd all be today."

"I take it then there is no opposition to awarding the director our highest decoration."

"I've still got five years to go before retirement. You won't hear any objection from me."

"Good. Then I'll write up the citation and we'll get Deputy Director John McMahon to present it to him in a full-fledged formal ceremony, with the CIA Undercover Band."

"It's the least we can do for the old man."

"No one in the CIA deserves it more."

"How did you ever think of it, Willoughby?"

"When you're in the intelligence business you HAVE to think of everything."